

# Tips for Navigating an Academic Conference

TxABA 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

April 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>

Houston, TX

# Recommended Talks:

## **FRIDAY, APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>**

### **9:00-10:30 AM: Legends I-III**

Bridging the Divide: Exploring the Intersection of Cultural Competency and Social Justice in Applied Behavior Analysis – Shawn Capell, M.S., BCBA., LBA-TX

### **10:45-12:15 PM: Legends V-VII**

Training Functional Analysis Skills – Jessica Juanico, Ph.D., BCBA-D

### **2:00-3:30 PM: Legends IV**

Practical Lessons from the Behavior Analytic Literature to Improve ABA Services – Einar Ingvarsson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA

### **3:45 PM-5:15 PM: Legends I-III**

Affirming Neurodiversity: A Panel Discussion – Rany Thommen, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA; Adithyan Rajaraman, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA-TN; Berenice de la Cruz, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA; Armando Bernal, M.Ed, BCBA

## **SATURDAY, APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>**

### **8:30-9:30 AM: Legends V-VII**

What happens when we let students select their intervention experiences? – Jeanne Donaldson, Ph.D., BCBA-D

### **9:45-10:45 AM: Legends IV**

What happens when we let Observational Learning in Children with Autism: Assessing Component Skills – Karen Toussaint, Ph.D., BCBA-D

### **11:00-12:00 PM: Champions III**

Promoting Sustainable Implementation of Behavioral Supports in Educational Settings – Natalie Badgett, Ph.D.

### **2:00-3:00 PM: Champions V**

Multidisciplinary Teaming: Enhancing Collaboration through Increased Understanding – Danielle LaFrance, Ph.D., BCBA-D

### **3:15-4:15 PM: Champions III**

Tales from the Trenches: Working as a Public School District Employee – Season Almason, BCBA

# Plan Ahead!

- Review the conference program ahead of time to identify talks and events that are of interest to you.
- Set networking goals for yourself. This could be meeting employers or colleagues or attending a certain number of talks.
- Ask people you know about what talks they are attending and why.
- If you are looking for new employment opportunities, prepare a short elevator pitch and practice it!

# Take advantage of ALL opportunities!

- Attend a panel discussion! These sessions will provide opportunities for you to ask questions directly to the presenters.
- Attend the poster session, even if you aren't presenting! Talk to poster presenters about their projects! They are there to talk with you!
- Attend the social event and the award ceremony! This is a great opportunity to interact with attendees in a more casual setting.

# Approaching Presenters

- Introduce yourself by stating your name and your position in the field.
  - E.g., “Hi, my name is Marcus, and I’m a doctoral student at UNT.”
- Try to reference a specific detail from their talk if you can. Taking notes during the presentation can help with this!
- Don’t ask for clinical recommendations or describe specific clinical problems! Presenters are not consultants!

# Visit the Exhibitor's Hall!

- The exhibitor's hall is a great opportunity to learn about the range of employment opportunities in the field.
- You are likely to run into other students, presenters, or professionals who you can interact with.
- You just might find a job opportunity or create a professional relationship that will benefit you in the future!

# Icebreakers

- If you're struggling to start a conversation, here are some prompts for icebreakers:
  - Ask a peer/colleague for their thoughts on a talk you both attended, or their thoughts on the conference in general.
  - Compliment a presenter on a particular detail about their presentation that you found meaningful or relevant to their work.
  - Ask open-ended questions, like "How did you become interested in the field/your area of research?" or "What are you hoping to gain from the conference?"
  - Ask for guidance on relevant topic: "I'm interested in learning more about [insert topic]. Do you have any recommendations for literature I should look into?"

# Additional Resources

BehaviorLive App:

iPhone



Android



Bercerra et al., 2020.  
Maximizing the  
Conference  
Experience.

